MARVEL

LIMITED SERIES

1 OF 5

TORRES
NAKATSUKA
GURU eFX

X-MEN®: RONIN

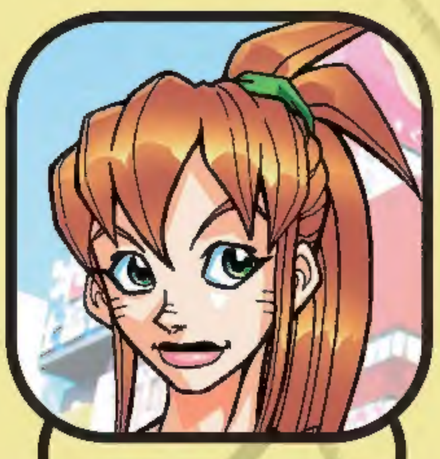
X-MEN: RONIN

PART ONE:
HAJIME NO IPPO
(The First Step)

WOLVERINE
(Logan)
Samurai Slasher

CYCLOPS
(Scott Summers)
One-Eyed Warrior

STORM
(Ororo Munroe)
Weather Witch



MARVEL GIRL
(Jean Grey)
Sultry Psychic

Who are the X-Men?

Humans share the world with mutants, people who have gained extraordinary powers by virtue of their mutated genes. The X-Men are a mutant team dedicated to preserving the peace between mutants and humans, and to protecting the world from those mutants who believe their genes make them the rightful inheritors of the Earth. The X-Men are...

Wolverine, a feral fighting machine with a metal skeleton and deadly, retractable claws-- one set made of metal, and one set composed of pure energy. His brother Cyclops, whose powerful, concussive optic blasts can only be controlled by a specially-made visor. Storm, a powerful mutant and magic-user with the ability to control the weather. Jean Grey, who possesses the mental powers of telepathy and telekinesis.

Together, the X-Men fight for the safety of a world that sometimes treats them as heroes and other times as outlaws!

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NO!

NO!

Who are you? What do you want with me?

We represent the magnificent Shadowcat ninja clan--

--and our services have been contracted to--

--capture you this evening, Jean Grey.

YAAAAH!!

NO!

Ungh!

Perhaps you don't--

--have enough juice--

-- for all three of us.

Don't worry...

We brought enough for everyone.

We came--

--prepared for--

--you, X-Men!

Inadequately prepared, if ya ask me.

SNIKT!

FALL

SHUK!

SHUK!

BZZZAP

BZZZAP

No, Logan-san...

SCRAACH!

This one is mine.

S'okay, Jeannie...

The good guys are here.

The Hellfire Club

Ooh, not good. Did you sense that, Emma?

Jean Grey got away.

Your hired ninja failed.

I can mentally scan as far as you, Tessa.

No need for the play-by-play.

Why does Jean Grey choose to associate with those ugly X-Men to begin with?

And I don't know what's more perplexing: how the public has come to see them as heroes despite their freakishness...

...or that any mutant would waste their time running around saving the lives of some measly homo sapiens.

I don't care what the other X-Men do with themselves. I'm only interested in Jean Grey and--

Getting *"made"*-- as the Italians might put it.

If you want the position of White Queen, you'd better hurry up and find a suitable pledge within the next--

Stop telling me things I already know, Tessa!

Then some advice: forget those Shadowcat ninja.

If you must employ lower-end mutants, then find someone capable of a simple kidnapping.

Yes, this wannabe capo needs a better crew...

Okay, someone needs to tell me about this Hellfire Club...

MANSION

That's something you shouldn't concern yourself with right now, Jean. You're still recuperating from the attack earlier. You need to rest.

I'm fine, Ororo. Just a little psychic fatigue. Slept it off already.

So, who are they and what do they want with me?

A lot of organizations out there want to exploit mutants. Criminal syndicates, common street gangs, the Army, and even the police force. Some have... rather aggressive methods of recruiting.

The Hellfire Club was formed overseas by former yakuza who are mutants. It seems they are now setting up shop in our neck of the woods.

Hellfire members hold themselves above humans and other mutants. They call themselves "homo sapiens supreme".

Just when we have gained some level of acceptance from the general public...

And what's more, the Hellfire Club only recruits people with "evolved minds"...

Like you.

... along come these mutant thugs who seek to destroy the respect we have fought to earn.

The Hellfire Club

How goes the recruitment process, Emma?

Fine. Say nothing. Block your thoughts, too. Tessa's mind is an open book...

Perhaps you can shift focus to another candidate. Cerebra has located some young people with potential... and not as much baggage. The psychic surgery shouldn't be as complicated.

Young mutants with open minds who haven't been tainted by the X-Men yet.

Look them up, Emma.

Grey may come around on her own.

Isn't that right, Cerebra?

JAPAN TOWN

coffee

Over here, Jean!

Keep up, girl. We almost lost you once already...

Try this. It's the herbal drink I was telling you about.

It might help bring you back to 100%. Plus it's quite delicious...

I told you I was fine! Stop doting. All I need is more time to practice with my powers, not some power drink!

Did you know we're being followed?

No... not a Shadowcat. More like a tom-cat in heat...

Where? More Shadowcats?

Oh.

It's him.

You know that cute guy?

I've seen him here before. He always... stares at me.

Her name's Ororo.

What's yours?

Er... my friends call me Forge.

That's an odd name.

Anyway, don't just stand there! Go introduce yourself!

Get her to buy you one of those funky drinks!

Your turn to buy the drinks, mate.

My turn? Drake's only bought one round so far!

Shut your traps, the both of you! I'm trying to watch the show over here...

You cheap bastard! It's your turn to buy me a pint!

Easy there, Pyro. You drunk already?

What did you just call me?

You heard me, you miser!

I think you need to...

CHILL OUT!

What do you think you're doing, Emma?

KSSS

KRAASH!

You're in trouble now!

You're ruining the dance program, Emma!

You're a wet spot, Frosty!

"Bring it, matchstick!"

Bring it, matchstick!

Playing action movie theater again, Emma?

The fight scenes were cliché and the dialogue was trite.

I'm recruiting, Tessa.

Okay, you freaks...

Audition's over!

It's showtime now.

TO BE CONTINUED!